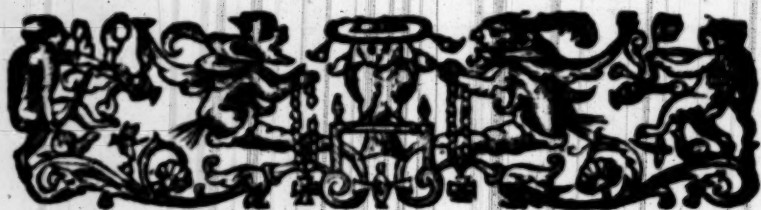


A Solemne
PASSION
OF
THE SOVLES
LOVE.

BY
Nicholas Breton.



LONDON,
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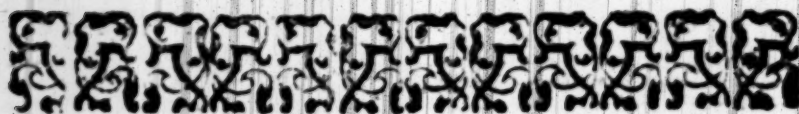
A Solemne PASSION of the SOULES Loue.

A Wake, my Soule, out of the sleepe of sinne,
And shake off slouth the subiect of thy shame,
Search out the way how best thou mayst beginne
To holy worke thine humble will to frame:
Then proue not wearie of a little paine,
When fleshes griefe will breed the Spirits gaine.

Confesse thy selfe vnworthy of the sence,
To learne the least of the supernall Will,
Beseech the heauens in strength of their defence,
To saue and keepe thee from infernall ill:
Then fall to worke, that all the world may see
The ioyfull loue betwixt thy God and thee.

Tell of his goodnesse how he did create thee,
And in his iustice how he doth correct thee,
And in his loue, how he will neuer hate thee,
And that his meroy neuer will reiect thee:
And how he helpt thee, when the world distrest thee,
And with his graces how he sweetly blest thee.

Say,





A solemne Passion of the Soules Lame.

Say, I was sicke, and he did send me health,
I was in prison, and he did set me free :
And I was poore, and he did send me wealth,
And I was blind, and he did make me see :
I was perplext, and he did heale my paine,
And being dead, he gaue me life againe.

When I was lame, he did my limmes restore,
When I was deafe, he made me heare his voyce,
When I was wounded, he did heale my sore,
When I was sad, he made my soule reioyce:
When I had sinn'd, he would not yet forsake me,
When I was lost, he did to mercy take me.

To say yet more, what he hath done for me,
I needs must say, his goodnesse hath no end,
Who, when on earth he saw no friend to me,
Did make me feeble I had a heauenly friend :
A heauenly friend, whose helpe doth faile me neuer,
But is my comfort, and my King for euer.

This is my Lord, my life, and all my loue,
My liuing Loue, and louing life indeed,
This is the blessing of my best behoue,
The sacred fruit whereon I sweetly feed :
This is the ioy that makes my heart to sing
Honour and glory to my heauenly King,

A 2

Oh





A solemn Passion of the Soules Loue.

Oh King, more glorious then the World can know thee!
From whom the day, euen from on high doth spring,
Where glorious workes vnto the World do shew thee,
Of glorious loue the euerlasting King:
The King of life, in whom the Soule doth proue
The highest glory of the heauenly Loue.

By whose high hands were all things made at first:
By whose deepe Wisedome they are gouerned still,
By whom alone are blessed or accurst,
That loue his Word, or disobay his Will:
By whose sweet breath they liue that doe attend him,
And by whose wrath they die that do offend him.

For who can bide the furie of his yre?
Or halfe conceiue the comfort of his loue?
Who plagues his foes with an infernall fire,
And plants his seruants in the heauens above:
Who shakes the heau'ns, and makes the mountains bow,
If he but once begin to knit his brow.

And where he loues, what will he leaue to doe,
To make the Soule acquainted with his kindnesse?
And with what ioy will he the Spirit woo,
To shun the woes that grow of worldly blindnesse?
What paine, or griefe, or death did he refuse,
To saue their liues that he did sweetly chuse?

Now





A solemne Passion of the Soules Lone.

Now for the greatnesse of his glorious power :
He is Almighty, and all glory his,
He made the yeere, the month, day, night and hower,
The Heau'ns, Earth, Sea, and what in them there is ;
In him alone doth all their being stand,
And liue and die in his Almighty hand.

He spake the Word, and by his Word they were,
And all was good his secret Wisedome did,
His Will did worke his fauour without feare,
And not a thought is from his Knowledge hid :
He knowes the hearts, and searcheth through the reines,
And sees the rootes euen of the smallest veines.

He deſkt the Skiew with Sunne, and Moone, and Starres,
And made the Seas to flow vpon the Sand,
Vpon whose shore his hand did set the barres,
They shall not passe to ouerflow the Land.
Amid the ayre he hath disperst the Clouds,
And onely Man within his Mercy shrouds.

Within the Depth the Fish their holes do keepe,
And in the Rockes the Conny makes his house,
Into the Earth the crawling Wormes do creepe,
And hollow Rockes are harbour for the Mouſe :
The Lyon keepes his den, the Bird his nest,
And Man alone doth but in mercy rest.





A solemne Passion of the Soules Lone.

Yet these and all are guided by his power,
And may not passe the passage he hath giuen them,
The Sunne his course, the Moone must know her houre,
And clouds must wander but where winds haue driuen the,
Beasts know their times, and Fishes know their tides,
And man alone in onely mercy bides.

To tell of wonder by his wisdom wrought,
Euen from the greatest to the very least,
Which time declares by true experience taught,
In Fish, in Fowle, in Bird, in Man and Beast:
Marke but the power that doth in each abide,
And how it weakens in their highest pride.

The Lyon first is fearefull of a Pee,
The Elephant doth dread the little Mousse,
A crowing Cocke the Dragon may not see,
The stoutest Eagle subiect to the Louse:
The greatest Oxe a little taint-worme killeth,
And many a man a little Canker spilleth.

Yet is the Lyon feared for his force,
The Elephant a huge and mighty beast,
The fiery Dragon kills without remorse,
And Eagles carry Lambs vnto their nest.
The Oxe the taint-worme vnder foot doth tread,
And man sometimes doth kill the Cankers head.

But





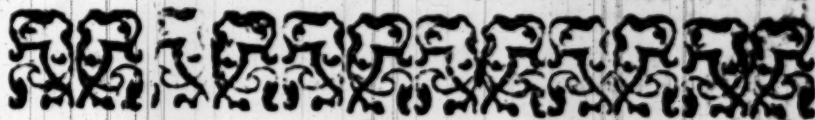
A solemne Passion of the Soules Lowe.

But when that power begins to gather pride,
Then see the strength of the Almighty hand,
By whose high helpe the weakeſt things are tride,
To ſpoile the ſtrength wherein the ſtrongeſt ſtand:
That they may know there is a power on hie,
In whom they liue, and at his pleaſure die.

To ſhew examples of the heauenly might,
Againſt the pride of the inferiour power,
The word of Truth doth giue a glorious light,
Where may be ſcene in minute of an houre,
How greateſt ſtaves that on their ſtrength were grouded
With headlong falls were vtterly confounded.

How *Pharaoh* firſt, the proud Egyptian King,
That would not ſuffer *Israel* to paſſe,
What plagues and griefes did the Almighty bring
Vpon the houſe, euen where his lodging was?
Frogs, Flyes, and Lyce did freely make their way,
Euen to the chamber where proud *Pharaoh* lay.

A number plagues the Lord did further threaten,
His land was ſtrooken with a darkſome feare,
His graſſe and corne by Graſhoppers was eaten,
The Plague deſtroyd his people euery where:
And laſt, himſelfe amidſt his army crowned,
Was in a moment in the red Sea drowned.





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

Yet through these seas his hand did make the way,
Where all his seruants went and wet no foot,
Which proues, his loue was his Electeds stay,
While Rebell hearts were torne vp by the root:
Which true example to the world may proue,
The glorious greatnesse of his power and loue.

Goliath boasted greatly of his strength,
Yet little *David* killd him with a stone,
The *Mad an* Host was strong, but yet at length,
By *Gideons* hand, the Kings were ouerthrowne.
By change of tongues fell *Babylons* great Tower,
And Christ his Word did break the Diuels power,

Yet in it selfe, what weaker is then water,
Which drown'd proud *Pharao* and his mighty Host?
A Loue or Flie is of a little matter,
Yet with such wormes ure men tormented most.
What strength, alas, is in a little stone?
Yet so we reade *Goliath* ouerthrowne.

Know then from whence this wonder-power groweth,
But from the force of the Almighty hand,
Which to the world his glorious power sheweth,
When with the weake, the strongest cannot stand:
King *David* wrote, and it is truly knowne,
That power belongeth vnto God alone.

To





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

To proue the prowesse of the heauenly power,
How many more examples might be showne ?
There is no yeere, no day, no night, nor hower,
But some such action to the World is knowne:
That Truth may well vnto his Glory speake,
God is of power, and all the World is weake.

But since the World cannot the Books containe,
Wherein his Workes of wonder may be writ,
To Admiration let his power remaine,
And say, All powers are subiect vnto it:
And let me of his Loue and Mercy write,
Which is the substance of my Soules delight.

This powerfull Loue, the glory of all grace,
When he had wrought the World vnto his will,
And planted each thing in his proper place,
And in the course that they continue still,
Of all the Works that he in wonder wrought,
Made onely Man the dearest of his thought.

For what he made, he made but Man to serue,
And Man to serue his onely sacred Loue;
And in his loue, doth so Mans life preferue,
As may the comfort of his care approue:
And so approue, as may this sentence giue,
His only loue doth make the soule to liue.

He





A Solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

He loued the earth when he did giue it life,
He loued the life when he his Image gaue it,
He loued the flesh that made the bone a wife,
He loued the soule, when he from death did saue it:
He loued him euer, yet he loued him most,
To tetch him home when he himselfe had lost.

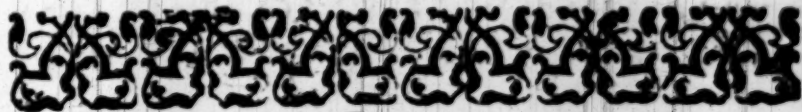
Come Poets, ye that fill the world with fancies,
Whose faining Muses shew but madding fits,
Which all too soone doe fall into those franzies,
That are begotten by mistaking wits:
Lay downe your lines, compare your loue with mine,
And say whose vertue is the true diuine.

For further triall, let me giue you leaue
To adde a truth vnto your idle stories,
Wherewith so oft you doe the world deceiue,
And gaine your selues but ill-conceited glories:
Yet when you see where sweetest sights are showne,
Looke on my Loue, and blush to see your owne.

With sunny Beauties let your loues be blest,
The Sun doth fetch his light but from my Loue;
You haue your wonders from the Phœnix nest,
Mine honour liues but in the Heauens aboue.
Your Muses do your Ladies praises sing,
The Angels sing in glory of my King.

The





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

The earth, alas, from whence your loues receiue
Their flowres and sweets, their pearles & precious stones,
To decke themselves, with which they do deceiue
The blinded spirits of the simple ones:

This earth from whence their outward graces spring,
Is but the footstoole of my heauenly King.

And if he so hath deckt the earth below,
Imagine then the glory of his seate,
Which may perswade, where Angels tremble so,
For humane eyes the glory is too great:

For where the Sunne, the Moone and Stars haue light,
For Natures eyes the beauty is too bright.

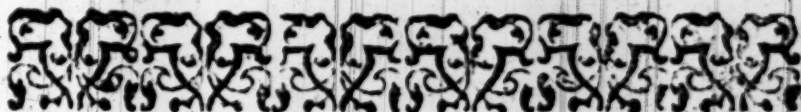
And who doth liue that euer ye did loue,
But that ye could their fairest faire vntold?
And my faire Loue, let fairest truth approue,
No eye can liue in glory to behold:

Your clearest beauty is with age declining,
My Loues bright glory is for euer shining.

If ye be wise, thinke where true wisdom liueth,
And then allow the honour to my Loue:
If yours be kind, thinke who the comfort giueth,
And know the Turkey from the Turtle Doue:

If constant yours, that truth let my Loue try,
Who lost his life, to saue his Loue thereby.

And





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

And let me see, how liueth all your loue,
But on desert the stay of all your state,
And in my Loue a further life approue,
Who lou'd indeed when he had cause to hate :
Your fancies oft for want of fauour starue,
But my Loue doth both yours and mine preserue,

Then truly say, whom chiefe your loues do chuse,
To cast the countenance of their fauours on,
Then whom againe they wholly do refuse,
In liking thought as most to looke vpon :
Then do but looke vpon my Loue his choice,
And whose heart most he maketh to reioyce.

The wealthy, mighty, wise and well at ease,
Doe fit the fancies of your Ladies best:
But poore, and weake, and simple soules best please
My heavenly Loue, to labour in his brest:
And who the World doth vtterly refuse,
Those doth my Loue vnto his fauour chuse.

And see what power is in your louing natures,
To take or giue what ye may gaine or lose,
And ye shall see they are but my Loues creatures,
Whose liues are at his pleasure to dispose :
And while your fauours all do fade away,
My sweet Loues blessings neuer will decay.

Could





A solemn Passion of the Soules Loue.

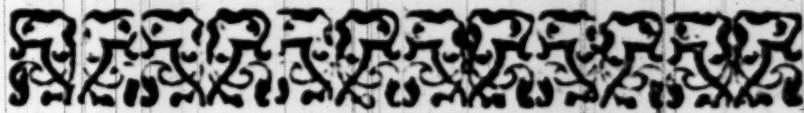
Could ye conceiue the smallest of the sweet,
That doth descend from my Soules dearest Loue,
Vpon the Faith that falleth at his feet,
That doth in prayer but in mercy proue :
And you will blot out euery idle line,
And yeeld our soules vnto this Loue of mine.

Compare a weed vnto a wholesome flower,
A cloudy Euening to a sunny Day,
A foggie mist vnto an Aprill shower,
Nouember blast vnto a bloome of May,
And you shall easily see the difference plaine,
Betwixt my Sun-shine, and your showres of raine.

Compare meere folly to the finest wit,
The courtest copper to the purest gold;
The healthfull body with an Ague fit,
And set the youthfull age against the old,
The Ravens foule note to Philomela's voice,
And quickly say, which is the better choice.

Compare foule Pride to faire Humility,
A kind discretion to a dogged nature,
The clownish race to true Gentility,
A blessed Angel to a cursed creature,
Fauours to frownes, and smilings vnto scowles,
And say, The Phoenix makes all birds but Owles.

His





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

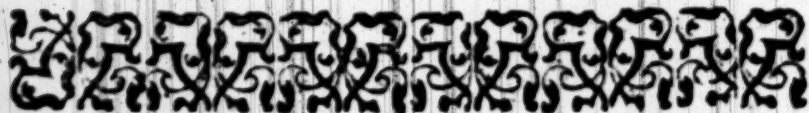
Compare the earth vnto the heauen on hye,
The spirits treasures vnto fleshly toyces,
The pibble stone vnto the azurde Skie,
The woes of men vnto the Angels ioyes :
 The lowest weaknesse vnto th' highest powers,
 Then see the difference twixt my Loue and yours.

And when you see how all sweet blessings grow
But from the ground of my Loues liuing grace,
And do againe the imperfection know,
Wherein you doe your fond affection place :
 Then all your titles to this truth resigne,
 There is no life but in this Loue of mine.

And giue me leaue to praise my princely Loue,
Although my wits are short of such a worth,
And let my spirit in my passions proue,
What his high hand in mercy will bring forth :
 And write but truth that may be truly proued,
 My onely Loue, all onely to be loued.

Before all times, all thoughts, all things he was,
And euer is, and will be aye the same,
That doth in wonder, wonders wonder passe,
In Truths high triumph of eternall fame :
 Where life, and loue, in grace and glory crownd,
 Do sway the Scepter of the heau'ns renownd.

Now





A solemne Passion of the Soules Love.

Now what he was, cannot be comprehended,
Who in himselfe doth all things comprehend,
And when that all things shall be wholly ended,
Himselfe, his Word, his Will shall neuer end:
Whose gracious life, all glorious love beginning,
Doth adde all grace, and endlesse glory winning.

And of his Essence, this is all we finde,
A spirit fully incomprehensible,
A louing God vnto his seruants kinde,
And in his humane nature sensible:
In wisdomes wonder, knowledge, quintessence,
And in that Essence highest Excellence.

The high Creatour of all creatures liuing,
The sweet Redeemer of his seruants lost,
The glorious grace, all grace and glory giuing,
The Ioy of ioyes that glads the spirit most:
The loue of life, and life of loue indeed,
Gainst death and hell, that stands the soule in need.

His seat is Heauen, the Earth his foot-stoole is,
His chiefest dwelling with his soules elected,
His ioy to loue, and to be lou'd of his,
His fauour, life, vnto his loues affected:
His Word is Truth, which doth the Spirit try,
Where fruitfull faith shall lue, and neuer dye.

His





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

His blessing is the peace of Conscience,
His comfort, mercies contemplation,
His precious gift, the Spirits patience,
His mercy, Vertues meditation:
His Grace, the oyle that kills the Spirits euill,
His Death, the Life that did subdue the Deuill.

His Garments are the sundry sorts of graces,
His Tribute is but Sinners sacrifice,
His Worke, the planting Vertues in their places,
His Gaine, the loue of humble spirits seruice:
His Musicke, Psalmes, that Angels neuer cease,
To sing in glory of the King of Peace.

This King of Peace, this God of Life and Loue,
Who in himselfe doth all and onely hold
The highest blessings of the hearts behoue,
That faithfull truth hath to the Spirit told:
This is the substance of my soules delite,
Vnworthy subiect of his Worth to write.

Yet as his mercy will vouchsafe his grace,
With Intercession of his high assistance,
Against the power that would my thoughts deface,
And proudly make against the soule resistance:
I will a little giue his loue a touch,
Whose smallest praise is for my pen too much.

What





A solemne Passion of the Soules Lane.

What loue was that which made him like Man best,
Of all the Workes that euer he created?
What loue againe did in that liking rest,
To loue him to he neuer can be hated?
What loue was more to giue the Man a Wife?
What loue was more to die to giue him life?

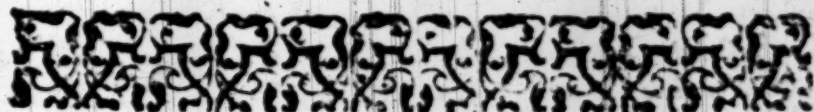
The Earth within with siluer, gemmes and gold,
Without with trees and hearbs, and fruits and flowers,
The water deepe, where Fishes keepe their hold,
The Elements with all their inward powers:
These hath my Loue all made for man to chuse,
And to his pleasure in his seruice vse.

The fire was made to kill the chilling cold,
The water made to slake the burning heat,
The subtrill ayre a secret breath to hold,
The earth too drie when moisture is too great:
These crosse in natures, yet doe meet in one,
Only to serue the vse of Man alone.

Each Bird, each Beast, each Fowle, and euery Fish,
The flesh of man must serue to cloath and feede:
What eye can see, or heart of Man can with,
But some way serues to stand poore Man in steede?
And for that cause their being first began,
From mercies Loue, to serue the life of Man.

B

The





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

The light was made to glad the lightsome eye,
The sound to please the pure attentue eare,
The ayre to draw a liuing breath thereby,
The earth the body and the limmes to beare:
The Clouds, the Starres, the Sun, the Moone, the Skie,
Were made for man, to make him looke on hie.

All these were made out of the mould of Loue:
Was neuer loue came euer neere to this,
Which doth a wonder in affection proue,
Euen when we least deseru'd the loue of His:
For when our soules did most offences doe him,
He came himselfe in loue to call vs to him,

To make, redeeme, preserue, defend, and cherish
His faithfull soules, and so in loue to nourish,
As in his loue their liues shall neuer perish,
But like the Lilly liue and euer flourish:
Are these not points sufficient to approue,
The true affection of a peerelesse loue?

Yet more to say, that truly may be said
In humble honour of this heavenly Loue,
In mercies sweet to make the soule dismaid,
To see the blessing of this God aboue:
The louing Spirit liuely to refresh,
He let his seruants see him in the flesh.

To





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

To see him so, as might not hurt their sight,
For none might see his high supernall power,
But in his loue to see that glorious light,
That gaines that sweet that cuts off euery sowre :
The second Person of himselfe, his Sonne,
In whom are all things to his glory done.

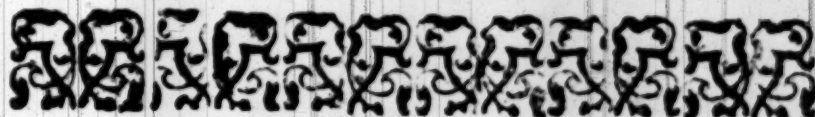
And see the cause why so he came vnto vs,
His onely loue, the onely cause we liue :
And when he came, what comfort did he doe vs,
To saue our liues, his Loue his life did giue :
And so to saue vs from the fire of hell,
That with his Loue we might for euer dwell.

What loue was this, to leaue his heauenly seat
Among his Angels, all in glory serued,
To come to Man, who did too ill intreat
The sacred loue, that hath his life preserued :
From being honour'd, prais'd, and glorified,
To be disgraced, whipt, and crucified ?

In loue he left his highest heauenly pleasures,
Aboue his Angels, in their heapes of ioyes,
To liue on earth in sorrowes out of measures,
With change of nothing but the Worlds annoyes :
In toyle and trauell, long in loue he fought vs,
And with his Death, at last full dearely bought vs.

B 2

Oh





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

Oh wofull trauell that he vndertooke,
To bring our liues vnto his sacred Loue,
Which paine, nor crosse, nor death it selfe forsooke,
That to our faith might his affection proue:
Which left the Spirit of his Loue behinde him,
To shew the loue that seekes him, how to finde him.

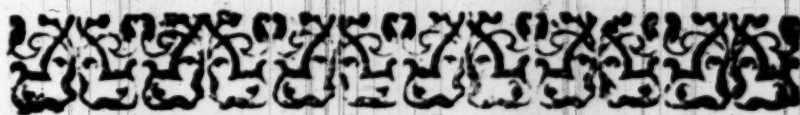
In loue he came, that he might comfort doe vs,
In loue went from vs to prouide our places,
In loue he sent his Comforter vnto vs,
In loue he guides vs with his holy graces:
In loue he made, bought, keepes, and guides vs thus;
And shall not we loue him, that so lou'd vs?

Yes, my deare Lord, be thou my dearest Loue,
For Christ his sake, let my soule neuer leaue thee,
Who in thy loue, thy liuing truth doth proue,
That makes me find the world doth all deceiue me:
And were there truth on earth as there is none,
Yet were thy loue the ioy of life alone.

And let these teares be witnessse of my loue,
Which first doe begge remission of my sinne,
And in repentance doe but mercie moue,
To ope the gates of grace and let me in:
Where humble Faith but at thy feet may fall,
With my soules seruice, loue, and life, and all.

Forget,





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

Forget, O Lord, my workes of wickednesse,
Whereby my soule with sorrow is oppressed,
And with the finger of thy holinesse,
In mercy touch my spirit so distressed:
And saue my life, that draweth nigh to hell,
Loue me a litle, and I shall be well.

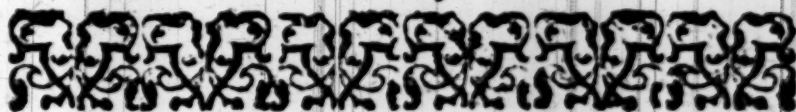
Loue? no, sweet Lord: mercy I craue, no more,
My sinnes are such, I dare not speake of loue,
But in thy mercy, to thy loue restore
My humble faith, that may but mercy proue:
And so approue, that all the world may see
The ioyfull loue betwixt my God and me.

Oh call me home, and make me heare thy call,
And heare thee so, that I may runne vnto thee,
And hold me fast, that I may neuer fall,
But that my soule may euer seruice doe thee:
Shew some good token, that the world may know,
My soule is blest, whom thou hast loued so.

And while I liue here in this wretched vale
Of fearefull danger of infernall death,
Where earthly pleasures take those soules to sale,
Which haue their bargaine in the hell beneath:
Let my soules loue, and life, and labour be,
To seeke my ioy, my loue, and life in thee.

B 3

Make





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

Make me not rich, lest I forget to thinke,
From whence I haue the comfort of my heart :
Nor in such want, let thy poore seruant sinke,
That I be driuen to craue the needy part :
Giue me but meanes the needy to relieue,
To feed thy flocke, and not the Wolfe to grieue.

Let me not listen to the sinners songs,
But to the Psalmes thy holy Saints do sing,
Nor let me follow Tyrants in their wrongs,
But kisse the rocke where righteousness doth spring :
Let not mine eye affect the outward part,
But let me loue the vertue of the heart.

And let my loue be, to behold thy loue,
And let my loue be, but to liue in thee,
And so to liue, that all the World may proue
The gracious good my God hath done for me :
To call my soule out of this World of wo,
In faithfull loue to serue my Sauiour so.

And when they see the blot of all their blame,
To loue the World, but all in wretched toys,
And do confesse with inward blushing shame,
They are but sorrowes vnto heavenly ioyes :
They may with me, forsake all worldly pleasure,
And make thy loue an euerlasting treasure.

For





A solemn Passion of the Soules Loue.

For Lord, by thee we are, in thee we liue,
And in thy loue the liuing cannot die,
And since thy death did our liues wholly giue,
For thy Loues sake shall we affliction flie?
No, my deare Lord, let life be death to me,
So I may die to liue in loue with thee.

A ioyfull life were such a death indeed,
From earthly pain to passe to heavenly pleasure,
A ioyfull line for louing hearts to reade,
To leaue the flesh, to take the Spirits treasure:
Whose glorious sence vnto the Sun doth fall,
That all is nothing to that All in all.

And I (alas) of many thousand soules,
Vnworthy most of his high Worth to write,
Who in his Mercies true record inroules
The louing substance of the soules delight:
Must mercy cry, for feare my loues presuming
Of too high sence, may be my soules consuming.

And with the teares of true repentant loue,
Looking vpon the wonders of that Wonder,
That in his least perfection may approue
The greatest wisdome of the world put vnder:
Confesse my wit as short to pen his praise,
As darkest nights in light of clearest dayes.

And





A solemne Passion of the Soules Loue.

And say but this in grace and glories height,
Where Vertues loue doth liue for euer crowned,
And all the Host of Heauen and Heauens await,
Vpon the highest of the Heauens renowned:
Whom Saints and Angels trembling do adore,
To him alone be praise for euermore:

All honour, praise, and glory euer be,
Vnto my louing euermlasting King:
This King of life, who so hath loued me,
To giue my soule this gracious power to sing
In heart and minde, in man and Angels loue,
All glorious glory be to God aboue.

FINIS.



